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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR MAURITANIA

Programme period	Resources	$
1993-1996	Net IPF	17 220 000
	Estimated cost-sharing	-
	Total	17 220 000

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I. DEVELOPMENT SITUATION, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

A. Socio-economic situation

1. In the late 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, Mauritania's economy was in decline owing to an unfavourable international situation, on the one hand, and the devastating effects of a prolonged cycle of drought and desertification, on the other hand. The damaging effects of these external factors were aggravated by the inefficiency of the country's production structures, poor management of public enterprises and population growth rate that outstripped the country's economic potential. The combined impact of the unfavourable domestic and external factors was felt in terms of a worsening of the macroeconomic imbalances, with an acceleration of the process of impoverishment and indebtedness.

2. In order to redress these imbalances, the Government, with the support of its chief partners, implemented an economic and financial recovery programme covering the period 1985-1988 (PREF), which was followed by a programme for economic revival and consolidation (PCR) carried out during the period 1989-1991.

3. During the period covered by PREF, Mauritania's economic situation improved markedly, as reflected in increased growth of the gross domestic product (GDP), which rose from an average annual rate of 0.2 per cent during the period 1980-1985 to 2.9 per cent during the period 1985-1988.

4. The PCR objectives, which were to achieve an annual rate of 3.5 per cent growth of the GDP, realize gross budget savings representing 6 per cent of the GDP, bring down the level of public investment to below 17 per cent of the GDP, keep the current account deficit to less than 10 per cent of the GDP and reduce debt service to between 20 and 25 per cent of export earnings, were not attained. The causes for this failure include the impact of the conflict with Senegal in 1989 and the effects of the Gulf conflict, which resulted, inter alia, in reduced disbursements by several major donors.

5. With respect to the human development index (HDI), the Human Development Report, published by UNDP in 1990 and 1991, placed Mauritania, on the basis of the available data, among the countries where human development was low, ranking it 122nd out of 130 countries covered by the report in 1990, and 147th out of the 160 countries covered by the 1991 report. The social indicators reveal that sharp disparities exist between women and men and between people living in rural areas and the inhabitants of towns and cities. Despite the substantial progress made in recent years, the trend of these indicators continues to be a cause for concern: the mortality rate among the under-five age group is 214 per 1,000 live births; life expectancy is 47 years; the adult literacy rate is 34 per cent; the combined primary and secondary enrolment ratio is 35 per cent; and the proportion of the population with access to health services stands at 30 per cent.

6. The economic and social situation is likely to improve substantially in the years ahead as a result of the political changes occurring in the country, which are aimed at consolidating the process of democratization, greater political and economic openness and respect for human rights. This process, which was initiated in July 1991 with the adoption of a constitution confirming the adoption of a multiparty system and freedom of the press, has been progressively strengthened during the first half of 1992 with the presidential, legislative and senatorial elections and the establishment of an economic and social council. This entire approach should encourage Mauritania's development partners, who are mindful of the conditions necessary to carry the process forward, to continue providing and increase assistance to the country.

B. National development objectives and strategies

7. Mauritania's development strategies and objectives are defined periodically in planning and programming documents and in the documents setting forth stabilization and adjustment measures, as well as in connection with procedures for the three-year rolling plans for public investment. As a result of the events of the Gulf war in particular, the adoption of a national plan providing guidelines for the period after 1991 is still pending, with discussions continuing between the Government and the World Bank with a view to the finalization of such a plan. Nevertheless, in the absence of a national plan, the Government confirms its firm intention to pursue, during the period 1992-1996, the strategies and objectives set in PREF and PCR. In addition, in an overall context, major programmes and projects negotiated with development partners during the period covered by PREF and PCR, have updated the general guidelines and have served to spell out in greater detail macroeconomic, sectoral or thematic aspects in their respective spheres.

8. In seeking to achieve and maintain the macroeconomic balances, the Government will pursue its policy of carefully managing demand and cutting government spending through a policy of budgetary stringency. The financial system, with its banking, monetary and credit components, stands in need of reform in order to improve performance in the interest of a more active supply-side policy, with supply being driven primarily by a private sector to which incentives are provided. Lastly, the currency exchange policy and the allocation of foreign exchange should be more responsive to market concerns, whose mechanisms will determine the levels of the balances that are being sought in the light of progressive improvements in the balance of payments.

9. As regards sectoral strategies and objectives, the rural development and fisheries sector, given its importance for the formation of financial, economic and social aggregates, will continue to receive the highest attention from the Government in the allocation of resources. Agriculture, with its components of crop and livestock production, which is increasingly receptive to private enterprise and market forces (systems governing the supply of inputs, production, marketing and lending), continues to be subject to the uncertainties of the climate and is not able to meet the food needs of the

people. Three national objectives emerge from the Programme for Economic Revival and Consolidation, from the development policy letter of April 1989 which sets out the rationale for the adjustment programme in the agricultural sector and from the contents of the major national programmes and projects in support of agricultural development. These objectives are:

(a) Food security. This is expected to result from an increase in crop and livestock production brought about by the implementation of coherent programmes for developing improved lands through comprehensive or partial water management measures. The strategies and means for attaining the national objective of food security follow from the national food security plan adopted in 1985. Activities for developing production in irrigation districts, farming in downstream areas and planting seasonal-flooding crops are taken into account in the programmes and projects that have been adopted or are under negotiation, such as the adjustment programme for the agricultural sector approved in 1989;

(b) Rural water supply, with village-based or pasture land irrigation systems, which will increasingly take into account the need to develop pasturage as part of an effort to mesh agriculture with animal husbandry. This national objective is spelt out in the master plan for water resources development adopted in 1990 and in the five-year investment programme for the rural water supply sector covering the period 1992-1996; and

(c) Preservation and sustainable development of the environment. The ways and means of attaining this national objective are spelt out in the multisectoral desertification control programme adopted in 1991.

10. As part of the preparatory work for the next Consultative Group, the Government is working for the consolidation of these three national objectives, by gradually making them a focus of the many programmes and major projects which help to further relevant goals, strategies and policies.

11. In the fisheries sector, the Government intends to implement a rehabilitation policy that is based on rationalizing the use of fisheries resources, on an integrated approach to the development of catching, unloading, packaging, processing and marketing networks and operations and on the development of small-scale fishing.

12. The human resources development and poverty alleviation sectors, with their components of employment, training, education, literacy promotion, health and social advancement, are among the Government's priorities, as defined in PCR. The strategies and objectives for these sectors should enable the Government to respond to difficult conditions:

(a) In the area of education, the aim is to improve the performance of the education and training system by increasing capacity to accommodate students, reducing unit costs and adapting activities to the requirements of the labour market. The Education III Project is playing a crucial role in this area;

(b) In the health sector, the indicators continue to be unfavourable, and the Government, taking into account the guidelines adopted in PCR, expects, with the implementation of the Health Master Plan for the period 1991-1994, approved in 1991, and the Health/Population Project, to improve the situation by focusing its efforts on strengthening central planning capacities; decentralizing the health care system to promote management at the regional level; and rationalizing the basic drugs distribution system;

(c) Lastly, the employment/vocational training and poverty alleviation sectors are receiving special attention in connection with ongoing activities relating to the national land-use management scheme, the application of the micro-enterprise programme and the food-for-work project (adopted in 1985), the social dimension of adjustment (approved in 1987) and activities carried out in 1990 and 1991 relating to occupational redeployment. With the support of its development partners, the Government will be able to devote its attention to programmes relating to vocational training; job creation in the modern, traditional and informal sectors; promotion of income-generating activities as a means of combating underemployment; emigration from rural areas; poverty; and, more generally, protection of disadvantaged or vulnerable population groups.

13. In the area of human resources development, the Government will, in connection with the preparatory work of the Consultative Group, focus its efforts on consolidating two programmes, namely, employment and vocational training, and community development and poverty alleviation.

14. Other sectors, such as mining, industry, energy and land-use management, will continue to be the subject of discussion with the donor community with the aim of defining specific strategies and objectives in view of the role those sectors play in supporting rural development and human resources development.

II. EXTERNAL COOPERATION

A. Role of external cooperation

15. Mauritania's development remains very dependent on external financing. Over the period 1963-1990, it received external aid of about $215 million annually, the trend being downward: $171.6 million in 1990 as against $240.5 million in 1989. The 1991 report on development cooperation, which deals with the aid received in 1990, shows the following breakdown: capital contribution or assistance to investment projects, 51 per cent; technical cooperation, nearly 28 per cent; food aid and emergency assistance, 10.6 per cent; and balance-of-payments assistance, 10.4 per cent.

16. For the same year, 86 per cent of the funding for technical cooperation was in the form of grants and 14 per cent in the form of loans. The breakdown between independent technical cooperation and cooperation linked to projects was 69 per cent and 31 per cent respectively. The personnel involved numbered

689, including 653 experts and 36 volunteers, all of them working mainly in the education, health and agriculture sectors.

17. In the breakdown of external aid between grants and loans, there is a clear tendency for the grant portion to increase: 31 per cent in 1987, 37 per cent in 1988, 56 per cent in 1989, and 60 per cent in 1990. In 1990, loans, which accounted for 40 per cent of the total, were concentrated in the category of assistance to investment projects (69 per cent). The breakdown of the aid by source of funding indicates the predominant position of the multilateral organizations accounting for more than 58 per cent (16 per cent United Nations system - in descending order, the World Bank, the World Food Programme (WFP), UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) - and more than 42 per cent from other multilateral organizations (mainly the European Development Fund (EDF), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD)). Bilateral agencies contributed nearly 42 per cent of the total assistance, the five largest contributors being the Governments of Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and Japan. Non-governmental organizations' contributions made up a little less than 1 per cent of the total external assistance.

18. The sectors that benefited from the assistance were typically, in order of importance: natural resources; agriculture/forestry/fisheries; energy; communications; aid and relief; and human resources.

B. Aid coordination arrangements

19. A consultative group mechanism for coordination between financial donors exists in Mauritania. The Ministry of Planning is the main institutional forum for such coordination and has three branches, one dealing with the planning and scheduling of development activities with the aim of achieving the fundamental balances; a second responsible for canvassing for, raising, and coordinating funds; and the third responsible for programming and managing human resources and technical cooperation.

20. The Ministry of Finance (Foreign Debt Department), the central bank, the Office of the President (Food Security Board) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs each make a contribution to aid programming, management and follow-up operations.

21. In this area, UNDP is contributing through such pertinent activities as annual reports on development cooperation, the National Technical Cooperation Assessment and Programme (NATCAP) and technical cooperation between developing countries (TCDC) processes, and also assists with activities undertaken by the Government to enhance control of the flows of aid it receives annually, to improve monitoring of technical cooperation in the light of existing or potential human resources, and to promote cooperation between developing countries.

III. THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

A. Assessment of ongoing country programme

22. The evaluation process that began with the mid-term review of the third country programme held in March 1990 found that implementation of the country programme had proceeded satisfactorily in Mauritania, the activities undertaken being in line with government priorities as set forth in the Economic and Financial Recovery Programme and the Programme for Economic Revival and Consolidation. A feature of the programme is the number of letters of agreements signed providing for national execution (11 projects in 1990 from all funding sources). It was recommended that the programme should continue with the same priorities: support for increased agricultural production, rehabilitation of the rural environment and strengthening of central and sectoral planning and management capacities.

23. Among the deficiencies noted are the difficulties in raising funds other than the IPF resources, particularly from cost-sharing operations, the modest amounts allocated for training in project budgets, the inadequacy of monitoring activities on the part of executing agencies, and the difficulties encountered with respect to counterparts and national project directors. On this last point, the Government and UNDP have agreed that strengthening of national capacity, particularly through coherent management training and development programmes, is a prerequisite for meeting the goal of optimum use of the human resources (including those of the private sector, communities and non-governmental organizations), and the technical and material resources, available in Mauritania.

24. The recommendations remain valid as regards: (a) greater integration of women into development activities; (b) the taking into account of environmental factors in each project; (c) strengthening of the private sector; (d) creation of a legal framework for the involvement of non-governmental organizations; (e) greater fund-raising activity for the programme; (f) more active monitoring by agency headquarters, with a greater number of field missions; and (g) a strengthening of national execution capacities.

25. The strengthening of national capacity as a prerequisite for the goals of implementation of the programme approach and of national execution of programmes, and more generally of internalizing the development process and ensuring sustainability, must take into account the need for management training and development and for the optimum use of the country's potential in human, technological and material resources.

26. Implementation of the third country programme had yielded encouraging results in the following areas:

(a) The strengthening of national institutional and organizational capacity in the fields of development planning and management, including management training and development activities and support for basic statistical and socio-economic studies;

(b) The rehabilitation of existing wells in rural areas and the development of new ones to meet human, animal and agricultural needs in the regions of Trarza, Brakna and Assaba;

(c) Desert encroachment control, agricultural and pastoral water management, and activities to protect and make sustainable use of environment and natural resources.

B. Proposals for UNDP cooperation

1. Preparatory process

27. The preparation of the new programme, begun in 1990, has continued in 1991 with the drafting of the advisory note, based on the conclusions and recommendations of the mid-term review, and on the results of the programming missions of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), as well as the advisory missions conducted as part of a programme-approach exercise. The analysis of development strategies and objectives was based on the PREF and PCR documents and other documents dealing with budgetary matters, the balance of payments and public investment programmes. The recommendations contained in General Assembly resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989 and UNDP Governing Council decision 90/34 of 23 June 1990 were taken into account in the preparation of the programme. At the core of the country programme are two framework programmes which meet the Government's strategic needs, namely, Human resources development and Poverty alleviation and rural development. The first programme has two subprogrammes and the second has three. The concept of a framework programme is defined here as a set of separate but interdependent activities, the implementation of which promotes the achievement of the Government's strategic objective in the area of concentration. Human resources development and Poverty alleviation will consist of a number of separate but interdependent activities, such as the formulation of an employment policy, the training of trainers, income-generating activities, and the improvement of health, nutrition and living standards. Likewise, rural development will consist of other types of separate but related activities, such as the upgrading of the rural information system, extension services, research and training, rural water supply and environmental protection.

28. Government officials took part in the preparation of the programme. Interministerial working groups and subgroups established for this purpose worked in close collaboration with UNDP officials. United Nations specialized agencies also participated.

29. On the basis of the UNDP areas of concentration chosen in the advisory note, analyses of the situation in various sectors and proposals for activities were worked out by the groups and subgroups; a coordinating unit, set up by the Government and consisting of the chairmen and the rapporteurs of the working groups, coordinated the proposals, while a committee within the Ministry of Planning distilled the proposals and put them into final form.

30. A further study was carried out by consultants, who made recommendations with a view to ensuring that the activities identified under the areas of concentration chosen in the advisory note were in keeping with the requirements of the programme approach. (The lack of national programmes of reference meant that the activities supported by UNDP in the two areas of concentration must relate to long-term objectives and to the Government's existing sectoral plans and programmes.) This effort by the Government, UNDP and the United Nations specialized agencies will continue with the development of programme support mechanisms relating to food security, rural water supply and environmental protection, in the rural development sector, and to employment and vocational training, human resources development and poverty alleviation in the human resources sector. The programme support mechanisms will consist of: (a) support for the Government in the search for greater coherence among the activities of the various parties involved in implementing these programmes; and (b) the preparation of a support document for each of the Government programmes, describing the UNDP contribution to its implementation and the coordination, management and evaluation mechanisms.

2. Strategies for UNDP cooperation

31. In the spirit of the programme approach, and in keeping with the areas of concentration singled out in the advisory note, UNDP will define the actions to be taken under the Government programmes which will achieve coherence among the various programmes and projects that are under way or under negotiation with various development partners. UNDP will support the Government in the definition of appropriate coordination and cooperation mechanisms for the programmes in which it participates. UNDP will give special attention to the strengthening of cooperation with the countries members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU). The Government, mindful that the achievement of its development objectives will depend on cooperation and coordination with those two entities, has already engaged in many activities with them at the regional level (transport, communication, etc.). There will be systematic and growing recourse to regional programmes. Linkages with regional projects and programmes will be strengthened and made more imaginative through the possible inclusion of activities involving not only the exchange of skills and experience, but also training, complementarity and regional integration.

32. The strategies designed to achieve such objectives are based mainly on the support provided by UNDP in respect of: (a) the strengthening of national capacities at all levels (Government, the private sector, local authorities, non-governmental organizations) and in all areas (institutional, organizational, planning, management and follow-up), particularly in the areas of concentration selected; (b) support for the coordination and cooperation activities which the Government designs for its development partners; (c) the development of local communities with a view to promoting self-reliance; (d) support for the efforts to identify people living in poverty with a view to their protection and social integration; (e) the integration of women into the development process; and (f) the promotion of human development.

33. These UNDP priorities have been taken into account in the allocation of the country's programme resources, through the choice of the activities included in the Government programmes of reference. Mauritania's fourth country programme activities will focus on the achievement of the three rural development objectives, namely, food security, rural water management and environmental protection, and the two national human resources development objectives, namely, employment/training and community development.

34. The formulation missions will define the support mechanisms, as well as the nature of the actions, their content, the timetable for implementation and the budget allocations, and the joint management, follow-up and evaluation mechanisms for the UNDP activities of which they are composed. These missions will endeavour to situate the chosen activities within the framework of the Government sectoral plans and programmes to which they relate, while correlating the UNDP activities with those of the United Nations system partners and other bilateral and multilateral partners.

35. During the fourth country programme execution cycle, some projects launched during the previous cycle, or approved prior to the launching of the new programme, will be continued so that their objectives can be achieved.

3. Proposed UNDP cooperation in selected areas of concentration

36. Two areas of concentration have been identified for the next cycle: rural development; and human resources development and poverty alleviation.

Rural development

37. The rural sector, which constitutes the source of income of more than two thirds of the population and which consumes more than a third of public investment funds, continues to play a special role in the Government's development priorities. In Mauritania, many activities are associated with this sector (food security, crop and livestock production, including small-scale fishing, and support thereto, environmental protection, drinking water supply and sanitation around water points). This further justifies the programme approach, which can promote coordination and linkages among the many subprogrammes and activities relating to the sector.

38. The Government's long-term objectives in this area follow from three national objectives: enhancing food security, regenerating the environment, and keeping populations settled in their localities. The Government is seeking, by applying sectoral plans, to carry out projects and programmes expected to produce integrated results that should help to:

(a) Enhance food security by improving the level of crop and livestock production, with a concern for systematically integrating farming and animal husbandry;

(b) Regenerate and protect the environment and keep populations settled in their localities;

(c) Exploit and rationally manage essential natural resources (soil, water, pasture land, forests);

(d) Meet the drinking-water needs of the rural populations and the livestock; and

(e) Promote local initiatives and transfer control of community facilities to the beneficiaries.

39. UNDP support for the national food security plan. As indicated in the national food security plan, the Government is seeking UNDP cooperation in activities that can be divided into two subprogrammes: upgrading the rural information system; and extension, training and research. These two subprogrammes will together help to develop crop production, animal husbandry and the environment, and they represent the main thrust of UNDP's involvement. They will be supplemented by three activities in this area.

40. The first such activity is the upgrading of the rural information system. The Government's goal is to manage the range of socio-economic and meteorological information, thus contributing to the planning, programming, management and protection of resources and of the potential for rural development. This involves specifically:

(a) Completing work on the permanent system for collecting and processing rural statistics (on crop and livestock production) so as to provide a reliable instrument for planning, programming and management in this sector, including planning for crop years and the follow-up to crop-year assessments;

(b) Expanding the country's plant protection capability, including the dual aspects of increasing production and reducing damage caused by birds, locusts and rodents, within the framework of an early-warning system to be established;

(c) Supporting increased agricultural production and the management of natural resources and the environment, thanks to a better command of reliable information on agro-meteorology and hydrology and a workable early-warning system on the farming and food situation in the country.

41. UNDP is expected to provide technical cooperation, in the form of financing for specific activities or co-financing of projects jointly with partners such as the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), UNSO or the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in areas where UNDP support is traditional. The goals here will involve: (a) activities to strengthen the country's system of rural statistics; (b) plant protection activities; (c) follow-up to "Agrhymet" activities; (d) support for the Organization for the Development of the Senegal River (OMVS), an agency

involved in the collection and processing of technical and economic data related to its sphere of competence.

42. The second activity consists of extension, research and training. In support of the activities mentioned earlier and with the view to creating and/or strengthening national crop and livestock production capacity and environmental protection capacity, the Government is developing interconnected projects involving extension, research and training as part of the mobilization of human resources to promote rural development. With this in mind, the extension work that has already been started in the case of rain-fed crops and traditional cereal crops needs to be strengthened and expanded to include other systems of production, the protection of the environment and the development and maintenance of rural infrastructures. These activities will be coordinated with similar ones carried out by other partners, especially the World Bank.

43. UNDP support is anticipated for the Government's efforts to:

(a) Integrate the various components of agricultural production (crop production, livestock production, pastoral water supply and environment);

(b) Support closer linkages between research, extension services and training in order to promote technical subjects and appropriate technological packages, which are to be made available to farmers and stockraisers, on the basis of a participatory approach;

(c) Take multifaceted action to support cooperative forms of production and to provide production support services, especially by training managers of cooperatives and by reforming and promoting the cooperative movement.

44. The third activity consists of complementary measures. In allocating resources to the rural development sector, UNDP will finance the preparation of a master plan for the development of dry farming, and will support the development of small-scale fishing to help the Imragen communities in the Banc d'Arguin area. It should also be noted the certain UNDP-administered funds go indirectly to fulfilling these objectives, as in the case of the Management Development Programme (MDP), which will help upgrade the skills of rural development administrators in project analysis and evaluation, or in the case of the NATCAP process, which will assist the Government in its efforts to bring technical cooperation into line with the human resources.

45. Lastly, UNDP will coordinate its work with UNCDF and IFAD in particular, and will assume responsibility for part of the technical cooperation component of the seed development programme, which supports extension services in the three facets of seed production, the creation of cereal banks and basic-seed production.

46. The expected result of this UNDP support for the national food security programme both in its component subprogrammes and in the complementary activities will be to achieve higher levels of crop and livestock production

by strengthening the country's institutional and organizational capabilities, establishing an improved national rural information system, devising and implementing basic and advanced training programmes for managers, and, lastly, slowing emigration from rural areas thanks to improved living and working conditions for the people concerned.

47. UNDP support for the five-year programme of investment in rural water supply. This programme reflects the PCR approach specified in the master plan for the development of water resources and in the 1992-1996 programme of investment in rural water supply. Under it, the Government is seeking UNDP support for activities that would constitute a subprogramme aimed at strengthening the country's capacity to manage wells in rural areas, with a view to improving the living and working conditions of the populations concerned in their spheres of activity and involving them to a greater extent in the process of development. The main focus of this subprogramme would be to provide the drinking water needed for the people and for agriculture, including stockraising; to improve the hygiene and the health conditions around wells; to upgrade wells; and to involve the local communities in gradually taking over the management of the water supply systems.

48. During the fourth country programme, UNDP support will be directed more specifically to the following activities:

(a) Strengthening the country's institutional capacity for planning and programming;

(b) Training and extension services focusing on the problems of water quality, hygiene and health;

(c) Developing the skills necessary to take care of minor mechanical repairs;

(d) Upgrading wells by promoting production activities and reforestation;

(e) Support for expanding the capacity of local communities to take over the management of the water supply equipment in their districts;

(f) Support for the programme to stem emigration from village communities in the Assaba region, a regional programme that has been submitted for approval and includes, in addition to a water supply component, activities involving desert encroachment control, job creation in rural areas and project creation in urban areas and, more generally, activities to improve the quality of life. UNDP will allocate $2,750,000 to finance the coordination unit responsible for the programming and management of activities under this programme. UNCDF, which is the initiator, will provide $9.6 million for the programme.

49. The expected result of the UNDP support for the rural water supply component of this programme will be the pursuit and intensification of the

activities undertaken during the third country programme in this area. The outcome will be to increase the number of improved wells, the satisfaction of the drinking water needs of sizeable numbers of people and livestock, and higher agricultural production on small improved plots around the wells.

50. UNDP support for the multisectoral desertification control programme. In conformity with General Assembly resolution 40/219 of 17 December 1985, the Government, in cooperation with its development partners, embarked on an integrated approach to desertification control with the definition of guidelines and strategies contained in a master plan adopted in 1986. Since then, a multisectoral programme comprising six programmes of action (protection, water, energy, development, institutional and legal, and support) has been prepared in cooperation with UNDP, UNSO, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank. This national programme was finalized and adopted by the Government in 1991. A donors' sectoral meeting was held in May 1992 to obtain the external resources needed to implement it.

51. In this area, UNDP support is expected to finance certain technical cooperation costs, including those of the institutional and legal programme and the support programme (extension services, training, research and public participation).

52. The results expected from this programme are:

(a) The establishment of Government mechanisms for consultation and coordination among the different donors involved in the sector and among the various operators concerned at the central, regional and local levels;

(b) An input of external funding resources at the sectoral meeting;

(c) Public participation in activities to combat desertification and to make sustainable use of the environment and natural resources.

53. Fifty per cent of country programme resources will be used to implement support activities for these three national programmes in the rural development sector.

Human resources development and efforts to combat poverty

54. Human resources development is a strategic area among the Government's economic and social development priorities. The scarcity of financial resources for development funding and the difficulties of mobilizing such resources are compounded by constraints arising from the lack of skilled human resources, particularly human resources which would contribute to economic growth and help share out any surpluses. In this area, the Government is trying to improve the occupational skills of the workforce and to provide jobs, as part of an active job creation policy and not just to meet the needs of development planning and development management activities or the need for skilled manpower. On the basis of national objectives and the programmes and projects implemented in this area, vocational training, community development

and efforts to combat poverty will receive particular attention from the Government, which will seek to ensure greater coherence in the programmes and major projects applied: the micro-enterprise/food for work programme adopted in 1985; the social dimension of adjustment project adopted in 1987; the UNFPA programme adopted in 1991; and the programme, now being finalized, to combat poverty in outlying urban districts, for which inputs are expected from UNCDF, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP and NGOs. It is also hoped that lessons will be learnt from occupational redeployment. The overall programme will help to improve the standard of living of the population, to reduce inequalities in access to basic social services and, more generally, to combat poverty and mitigate the social impact of adjustment.

55. The health and education sectors are receiving major assistance from such multilateral partners as the World Bank and the African Development Bank and from several bilateral sources (Governments of China, France and Italy). UNDP will help by financing the technical cooperation component of programmes and projects financed by UNCDF, UNSO, UNFPA, IFAD and WFP. UNDP cooperation will be concentrated in the employment and vocational training sectors and in the support for human resources development sector, under the heading of integrated community development. Such assistance will be grouped under two subprogrammes, the employment and vocational training subprogramme and the programme for community development and efforts to combat poverty. Other donors are supporting the Government in the above-mentioned sectors: in the health sector, the Saudi Fund and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) are financing health-related capital development and infrastructure, EDF is funding hospital rehabilitation, the World Health Organization (WHO) is supporting the health master plan and NGOs are helping strengthen the health system. The Islamic Development Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and several bilateral organizations from Western and developing countries (Arab and Maghreb countries) are providing assistance in the education sector.

56. Employment and vocational training. In a situation of widespread unemployment aggravated by adjustment measures, the Government's main goals are job creation and the promotion of income-generating activities to combat underemployment, poverty and misery. Efforts will be made to match training to employment opportunities. Many university graduates are unemployed because their qualifications cannot be used, while many sectors are in need of skilled manpower. Vocational training will be overhauled, developed and geared more closely to the needs of the job market.

57. UNDP support is expected for the following activities:

(a) Design of an employment policy. UNDP technical cooperation will help the Government design an employment policy based on an evaluation of the present situation and development strategies and policies which, on an overall basis and for each national programme, will determine opportunities for job creation and define back-up measures, especially business promotion and vocational training activities to facilitate such job creation;

(b) Training of trainers. This activity will be designed to strengthen national capacities to receive and place students, manage training activities and dispense vocational training skills in existing centres, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the vocational training system, with the twofold objective of meeting needs for skilled manpower and gradually reducing reliance on technical cooperation;

(c) Advanced training of national management-level staff. The results of employment and vocational training policies will depend to a great extent on the skills of national management-level staff, who should be given advanced training by means of short practical courses, seminars, study abroad and other retraining and advanced training activities.

58. The results expected from UNDP support for employment and vocational training are the finalization of a national employment policy, better coordination between employment and training opportunities and, more generally, enhanced human resources mobilization.

59. Integrated community development and efforts to combat poverty. The Government's aims in this area are basically identical to those for the employment and vocational training subprogramme, targeting poor communities which must be brought into the development process and provided with living conditions which will induce the inhabitants to stay in the places where they live and work. With this subprogramme, the Government intends to take action to stem the emigration from rural areas and reduce the strains which such population movements place on socio-economic balances. One example is the UNCDF programme in Assaba, a component of which takes account of the needs of rural and urban communities and makes linkages between seasonal employment in rural areas and in urban areas.

60. UNDP, in consultation with organizations of the United Nations system, will provide support, for this subprogramme to promote grassroots initiatives enabling people to take their future into their own hands, especially in poor communities and vulnerable groups. UNDP support will go to promote income-generating activities and improve the health and nutrition situation of such populations. The following activities will be covered:

(a) Development of income-generating activities as a means of combating poverty. This offers opportunities for UNDP technical cooperation, inter alia, in the area of support for the establishment and promotion of organizations, associations, group, cooperatives, communes and NGOs. The expertise of the United Nations system in general and UNDP in particular in integrating women in the development process will be greatly appreciated when it comes to training women community leaders and providing the necessary means to launch production or service activities;

(b) Enhancing the health and nutrition situation of populations in regions not covered or insufficiently covered by programmes and projects financed by other partners, by means of activities in the areas of prevention, disease control, improvement of health conditions, protection of wells and maternal and child welfare;

(c) The programme to rehabilitate the Dar Naim district on the outskirts of the capital city in order to enhance the living conditions of a population estimated at 50,000 inhabitants. For this programme, UNDP will finance the establishment and functioning of a decentralized unit of the Department of Buildings, Housing and Urban Development.

61. UNDP support for this national integrated community development and poverty alleviation programme is expected to improve methods of identifying and monitoring target populations, to strengthen mechanisms for improving their status and integrating them into the development process, and to see to it that their basic needs are better met.

62. UNDP support for the implementation of both programmes, the employment/vocational training programme and the community development and poverty alleviation programme, will account for 40 per cent of the fourth country programme's resources.

C. Arrangements outside main country programme areas

63. Projects begun during the previous cycle, already approved or in the pipeline but outside the country programme's two areas of concentration involve development of the private sector, mining resources, old towns and foreign trade. The cost of the activities is set at $1,772,220 or 7.6 per cent of total IPF resources for the period 1992-1996.

D. Management arrangements

64. Pursuant to the recommendations contained in General Assembly resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989, an effort will be made to take advantage of the contributions of the programme approach in designing and implementing both umbrella programmes of the current country programme.

65. For innovative ways of implementing the country programme to be applied in Mauritania, several things will be necessary:

(a) The means at the disposal of UNDP will need to be increased in a coherent way so as to improve the identification, monitoring, and assessment of activities to be carried out in the areas of concentration selected;

(b) National technical and administrative capacity must be strengthened through personnel training measures. During the cycle, national project development and the use of national expertise will be considered. National execution will involve both the Government and other national entities. The Government and UNDP must determine how best to combine the various implementation modalities (governmental and non-governmental agencies or United Nations specialized agencies). Greater use will be made of skills available at the country level and efforts will be made to diversify the sources of advice (United Nations agencies, TCDC, NGOs, United Nations

International Short-term Advisory Resources (UNISTAR), transfer of knowledge through expatriate nationals (TOKTEN), and so on). In addition, UNDP will support the Government in establishing links with centres for technical excellence and for development in the areas of concentration;

(c) The Government needs to design national programmes and organized mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of their implementation, such national programmes to include the activities supported by the various development partners. Within this framework, the specific Government/UNDP monitoring and assessment mechanisms will be defined for the country programme activities, which will be grouped in umbrella programmes and subprogrammes for the sake of convenience in managing cooperation;

(d) Sectoral or thematic meetings will be organized such as those on water and the environment scheduled for 1992. Particular attention will be paid to monitoring and assessment of programmes: tripartite reviews, post-assessment and field visits. Projects subject to programme financing will be carefully examined at the office level by the review committee, which will where necessary seek the advice of specialists in the areas concerned. The programme as a whole will be reviewed annually in the context of ongoing programming and will be subject to a mid-term review taking into account changing economic conditions, and may also be subject to adjustment.

66. During implementation of the country programme, ways and means will be sought of making the actions undertaken permanent by ensuring that they can be taken in hand by the host country and continued after technical cooperation has ended. The NATCAP process, TCDC, the strengthening of national programme and project implementation capacity, and other activities relevant to both umbrella programmes - United Nations Volunteers (UNV), TOKTEN and fellowships - will help enhance implementation.

67. The conditions of implementation of the country programme will be subject to annual assessment and to a detailed mid-term review. Support mechanisms for the five subprogrammes making up the two umbrella programmes will specify how they are to be assessed, as well as how UNDP-financed activities are to be managed and evaluated.

68. During missions to formulate the supporting documents for the umbrella programmes, the Government and UNDP will agree to set up focus groups on specific issues to coordinate those programmes and to strengthen the national execution audit system or, more generally, to tighten the conditions for national execution.

Annex I

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

I. ESTIMATED RESOURCES (IPF + cost-sharing) TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR PROGRAMMING

(Thousands of dollars)

Fifth cycle IPF	23 222	
Carry-over from fourth cycle IPF	(2 002)	
Amount allocated in 1992 for extension of the third programme	(4 000)	
Project cost-sharing (Government)	-	
Project cost-sharing (third party)	-	
Total cost-sharing		-
TOTAL (for period 1993-1996)		17 220

II. ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES (IPF + cost-sharing) BY AREA OF CONCENTRATION

Area of concentration	IPF	Cost-sharing	Total	Percentage of total resources
Rural development	9 117		9 117	52.9
Human resources	7 294		7 294	42.4
Subtotal	16 411		16 411	
Unprogrammed reserve	809		809	4.7
TOTAL	17 220		17 220	100

III. COMPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER SOURCES USED IN AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

(Thousands of dollars)

A. UNDP-administered funds		
Special Programme Resources	-	
UNCDF	14 217	
UNSO	12 000	
UNIFEM	-	
UNRFNRE	-	
MDP	854	
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	150	
Subtotal		27 221
B. Other United Nations resources		
JCGP participating agencies		
UNFPA	5 000	
UNICEF	10 000	
WFP	30 000	
IFAD	2 000	
Other United Nations agencies (non-UNDP financed)		
Subtotal		47 000
Total non-core and other United Nations resources		
C. Non-United Nations resources		
TOTAL		74 221

Annex II

PROGRAMME MATRIX

Area of concentration	Area of focus*					
	Poverty eradication and grass-roots participation	Environment and natural resource management	Management development	TCDC	Transfer and adaptation of technology	WID
I. RURAL DEVELOPMENT						
Rural information	*	*			*	*
Extension services	*	*	*			*
Water supply	*	*	*		*	*
Seeds	*	*	*			*
Desertification	*	*	*	*	*	*
II. HUMAN RESOURCES						
Vocational training	*		*	*	*	*
Community development	*	*	*	*	*	*

* Asterisks indicate major linkage only.